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RWANDA

White House Press guidance

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Q: Up until this point, you have been saying only that "acts of genocide may have occurred in Rwanda." With the preponderance of evidence now emerging, why are you not willing to say that what has occurred in Rwanda is genocide?

A: Based on the evidence we have seen from observations on the ground, we have every reason to believe that acts of genocide have occurred in Rwanda.

Q: What obligation does this entail for the U.S. Government?

A: As you know, the United States has strongly supported the introduction of a peacekeeping force into Rwanda as soon as possible to protect individuals at risk and to assist the supply of humanitarian assistance. The United Nations now has commitments on the part of about 10 nations to provide troops for this operation, and the United States will assist them with financial, logistical and material support. We believe that this international force is the proper response to protect individuals at risk.

A: In addition, we have strongly supported the decision by the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva to send a team of human rights officers headed by a special rapporteur to Rwanda to investigate and document breaches of international humanitarian law and crimes against humanity, including acts of genocide. His report will include recommendations for identifying and holding responsible those who have committed these acts and for preventing future violations and abuses.

Q: Why have you resisted making this kind of statement until now?

A: We have consistently said that we believe acts of genocide may have occurred in Rwanda. We have strongly supported the full investigation and documentation of these crimes against humanity.

A: Again, based on the evidence we have seen from observations on the ground, we have every reason to believe that acts of genocide have occurred in Rwanda.

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